# Historic Antelope Covered Bridge
## Eagle Point Historical Society March 1999

# Historic Antelope Covered Bridge

## Eagle Point, Oregon

**Story and cover photo by Barbara Hegne**

In 1922, two identical covered bridges were built within 3/4 mile of each other.One of the "twin" bridges spanned Yankee Creek, the other crossed Antelope Creek (Yankee Creek runs into Antelope Creek).

The two bridges were built by two brothers, Lyal and Westley Hartman sons of legendary Jackson County barn and bridge builder, Jason Hartman. Mr. Hartman arrived in Jacksonville in the 1880's from Ohio. Mr. Hartman began building bridges right away and although he did not draw up plans, he built most of the covered bridges in the county.

In the early days of bridge building, trees were cut and hand-hewn near the construction site. Horse and wagon was used to haul timber and supplies. A giant "hammer" was horse-operated to drive the pilings into the ground. A large wheel wrench was used to tighten the nuts on the large steel rods. This job of turning the wrench took four or five men to do. The sockets in the center were changed to fit the nuts.

The Antelope Creek and Yankee Creek bridges were built 16' wide by 44' 7" long. They had "Oueenpost" trusses. The Yankee Creek bridge was rebuilt in 1937 and repaired in 1944, 1954, and 1955. The rounded front opening which matched the Antelope Creek Bridge was angle cut when it was re-built in 1937. This changed the identical look of the two bridges forever.

The bridges were big enough to accommodate horse, wagon and Model T's. However, with the passing of time, their small size could no longer handle the traffic load of modern times.

In 1969, Antelope Creek Bridge was bypassed when the county built a concrete bridge a few yards south of it.

The Antelope covered Bridge fell to ruin, but it was not entirely forgotten.

The Yankee Creek Covered Bridge was condemned because its small load limit prohibited large vehicles such as busses and garbage trucks to pass over.

The Antelope Bridge sat silent with just the howling wind and an occasional rabbit passing through. Who would have guessed the controversy these quiet bridges would bring the next 16 years?

Antelope Creek runs northwest and joins Little Butte Creek which continues west about two miles to empty into the Rogue River. It was in July 1860, when an 80' by 16' wide bridge was completed on Little Butte Creek (near the present bridge located on Hwy. 62). The road at that time followed the north bank of the creek. In December, 1861, all bridges on Little Butte Creek washed away. James Fryer built a new bridge "crossing Little Butte Creek between Nick A. Young & Westgate Store". It was completed November 9, 1864.

In 1871, a road was built on the south side of the creek (now south Shasta) and a bridge was built by Isaac Skeeters to cross at Peter Simons (end of Loto Street). In September 1880, Ed Smith built a new covered bridge at this site. During the bad winter and heavy snows of 1890, the roof of the bridge gave way.

The old bridge served the community until it fell to ruin in the 1930's. A wooden bridge was built a stone's throw upstream. In 1947, the concrete William Perry bridge was built. At one time, there were five swinging foot bridges across Little Butte Creek, but as these bridges disappeared, they were not replaced and the only way to get across the creek was to walk the narrow sidewalk built on the bridge. As the community grew, a problem developed when the children had to compete with the traffic to get to school.

**The Fate of the Yankee Creek Covered Bridge**

Yankee Creek Road is an old road mentioned in the commissioners journals of 1873. The Yankee Creek Bridge was built in 1922, repaired in 1937 and a new shingle roof was put on October 25, 1944. In 1973, a decision to take the bridge down and build a new one was made. The layout of the old road would not allow the bridge to be bypassed

Top left: Simon's bridge sat across from present day Loto St. It was built in 1871. Top right: Riley Bridge which also crossed Antelope Creek. Bottom: Yankee Creek Bridge, built in 1922, destroyed in 1974. Photo shows part of the bridge has already been removed.

## Historic Antelope Covered Bridge

## Eagle Point, Oregon

By Barbara Hegne

as the Antelope Bridge had been. And the only solution was to tear it down.

Although the meetings regarding the destruction of the Yankee Creek Bridge, were open to the public, no one seemed to know anything about it until it was too late. In April 1974, the county dismantled the bridge and burned it.There was a public outcry as to the losing of another covered bridge.

Two miles northeast of the Antelope & Yankee covered bridges, on Riley Road, was another covered bridge that crossed Antelope Creek. Originally, this bridge sat near the mouth of Little Butte. It was built by Jason Hartman around 1908. In 1921, this bridge was moved to Riley Road. In 1959, it was replaced by a concrete bridge. The taking down of this covered bridge passed without incident.

In 1980, an idea developed in the mind of Eagle Point resident, Ken Oswald, to move the old Antelope Covered bridge to Eagle Point to be used as a foot bridge across Little Butte Creek. The idea was kicked around, but the plan fizzled and another 'push' to have the bridge moved came to light in 1983, then again in 1986. With the community alerted to the ideas and with several citizens groups "fired up", the idea blossomed. However, there would be many hurdles to clear before action could result.

Little problems and concerns developed such as: ownership of the bridge, funding and land title of the ground the bridge would be moved to. Part of the Antelope Bridge sat on Julene and Murphy Clark's land. They were willing to give their half to the historical society or the city. However, the county claimed ownership to the bridge. They said even though a survey error might have been made years ago, the bridge still belonged to the county.

It took seven years to win the battle of moving the bridge. A request for county historical funds from the Southern Oregon Historical Society became a concern. Up to this time, the SOHS received most all the county historical money. Applying for this money actually brought to light a realization that the county money needed to be split more evenly between other qualified societies and historical agencies than just SOHS.

The Eagle Point community and nearby citizens banned together and had several fund raising events including: Bar-B-Q, Fun Run, Walk-A-Thon, raffles, booths and they collected money from commercial and private donations. The Dahack family donated the land for the west bridge approaches to the Eagle Point Historical Society.

On Sunday, August 30, 1987 the bridge was moved to Little Butte Creek. It was completed, opened to foot traffic and dedicated December 5, 1987.

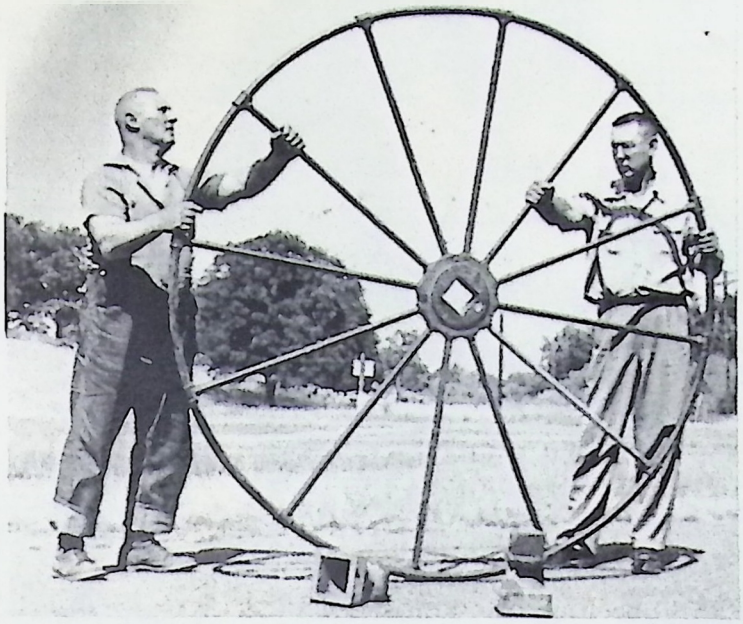
**Modifying The Design**

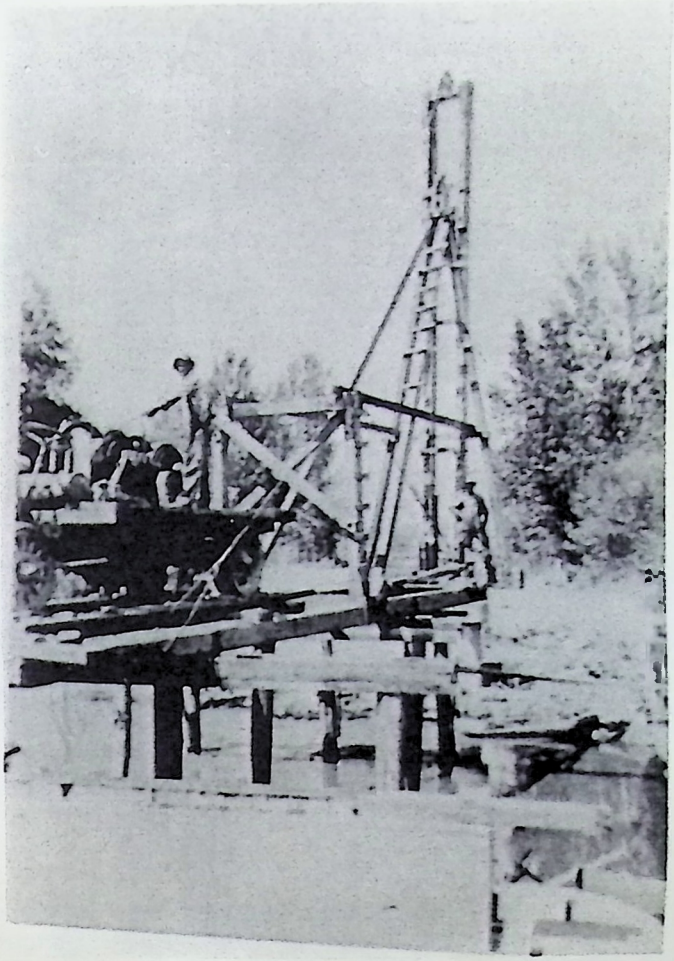
To provide viewing both inside and outside the bridge, six arched portals were cut in the sides. Although, the Historic Preservation Office had been consulted before the windows were cut, the bridge was taken off the Historic Register. The reason being the window openings were too big and "that the arched pattern of the openings does not match any other traditional bridge opening design in Oregon." Many people wanted to board up the windows, but it was decided to keep them even though the bridge would not be on the Historical Register.

The bridge has fulfilled its purpose as a safe pedestrian walkway for the school children, however, not without problems.Some students have been caught smoking inside the bridge and complaints were received at city hall that certain students were insulting visitors who came to town to view the bridge.

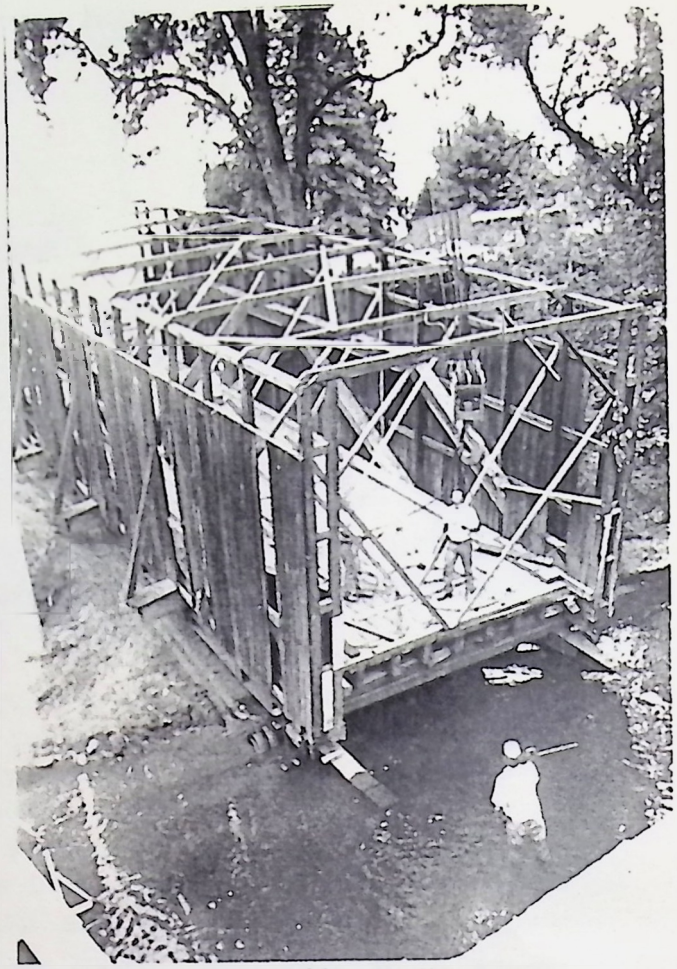
A volunteer parent patrol was set up to supervise students during school hours when they were using the bridge. This system worked well.

No major problem happened to bring attention to the Antelope Bridge until 1995 when the town woke up to find the bridge had been white washed. No one seemed to have much information who had given anyone the authority to put anything on the bridge.





Top: Lyal Hartman left, and his brother Wesley, hold the wrench wheel their father, Jason, used in early covered bridge building.
Top right: 1921 "Hammer" the Hartmans' used to drive the pilings.
Center: The Hartmans building the Antelope Covered Bridge.
Bottom: Antelope Covered Bridge before being moved to Eagle Point.



Top two photos: moving the Antelope Covered Bridge to Eagle Point. Bottom: Antelope Covered Bridge, a safe walkway for the children crossing the creek to go to school

ity to put anything on the bridge.

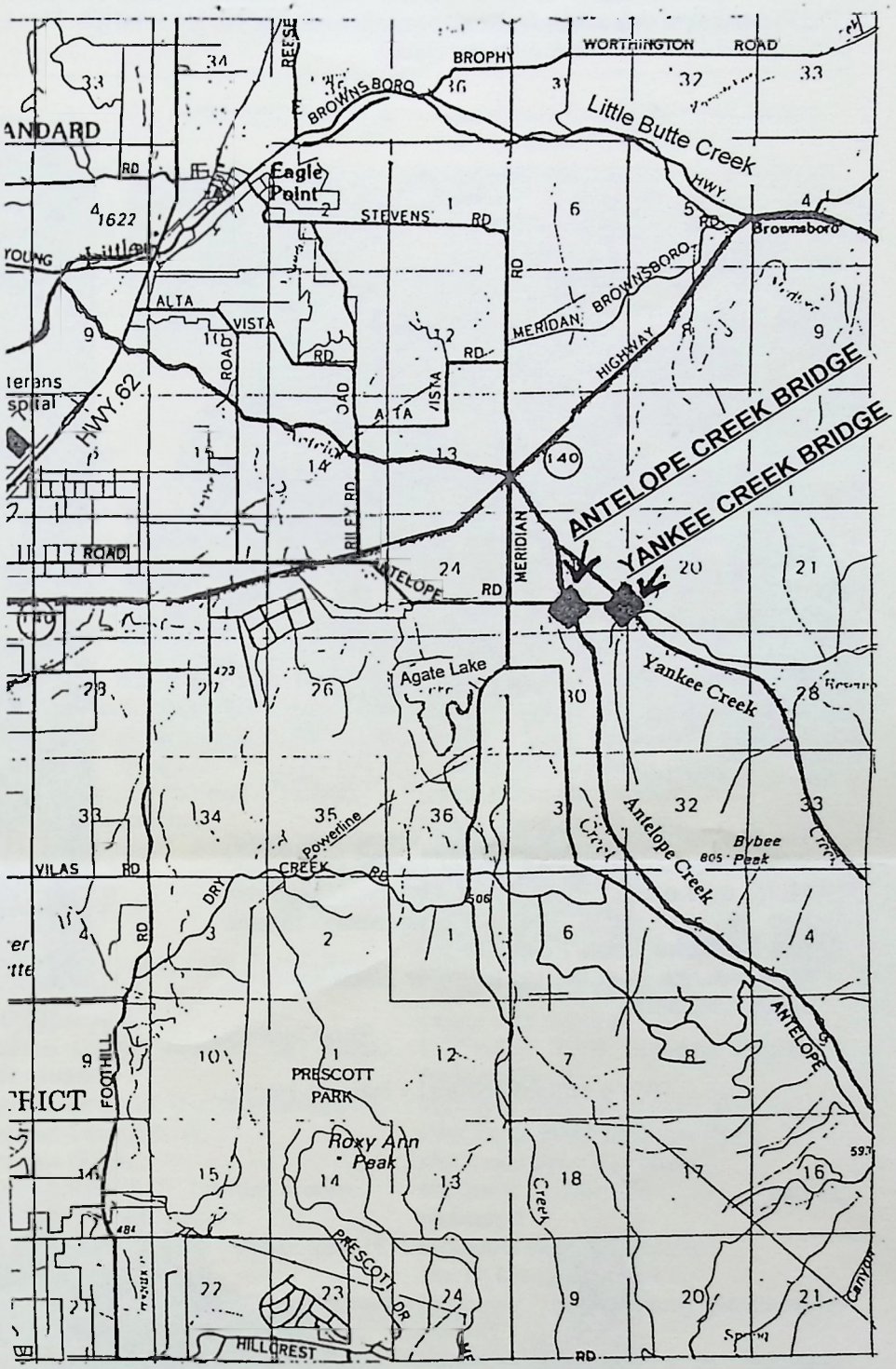
The townsfolk wrote letters to the local newspaper and called the city hall in protest of the white wash on the bridge. The city explained some of the boards were rotting and there was an insect problem. The bridge was fumigated and a protective sealer was put on the outside. The community was asked to vote on the paint color. They decided on white.

The Eagle Point Museum has some old photos of the bridge before it was moved and it had a whitewash on it at one time.

The Antelope Covered Bridge is located in the Historical District of Eagle Point along with the Eagle Point Museum (the old Long Mountain School built in 1925) and the Butte Creek Mill (built in 1872) and some of the older residences. The Historic District is of major benefit for the recognition of our pioneer past. And the country charm of the Antelope Covered Bridge fits in with this history.

The community is growing and during the school year the covered bridge is overflowing with children. The added traffic has caused long delays across the auto bridge during peak hours.

Maybe the time is ripe for another bridge to span the creek. The city still owns the right-of-way where the old covered bridge sat in 1871. A perfect spot for another bridge?




Twin Covered Bridges, Antelope & Yankee

Have you ever heard of Rolling Rock, Eagle Point, Oregon? The museum has a post card hand written from Rolling Rock, Oregon February 16, 1910. It is a real rock located on the Brownsboro-Eagle Point Highway, 2 miles east of Eagle Point, just beyond the Brophy Road turn off, on the left side of the hill. This large rock sits near the edge of the road and looks like it is about to roll onto the road.

The post card reads: "Dear Auntie, I recd. your letter. Will write soon. This is a photo of The "Rolling Rock" *1 1/2 mile east of Eagle Point, Oregon. Taken this Feb. 16, 1910. Ernie. The card is addressed to Mrs. Ada Matthews, Eagle Point, Oregon.
*The distance from the old Mathews place would be about 1 1/2 miles.

Post Card

Top & bottom photos by Barbara Hegne

# Polk's Jackson County Directory 1914
## Eagle Point.

An incorporated town, 12 miles northeast of Medford on the line of the Pacific & Eastern Railway. Has three hotels, a bank, two churches and several stores.

Mayor—John M. Nichols
Recorder—John V McIntyre
Treasurer—Roy Ashpole
Marshal—Louis E. Smith
Councilmen—J. Frank Brown, J. W. Smith, Arthur Nichols, F. L. Heath, H. O. Childreth, George Fisher. Council meets first Tuesday of each month.
AOUW, Snowy Butte Lodge No. 138, W. H. Brown financier.
Ashpole Roy (Donna B) (Eagle Point Hardware Co.)
Ayres Rosa, waiter Sunnyside Hotel.
Bacon Charles A. (Anna), conductor Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Blaess Louise, waiter Eagle Point Hotel
Board of Education, Wm. W. P. Holt chairman, Frederick Pelouze, E. S. Wolfer, A. J. Florey clerk.Boltz Thomas F. (Edith R.), supt of construction Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Brown George & Sons (J.Frank, Wm. H. and Royal G. ), general merchandise.
Brown Hazel, student.
Brown J. Frank (Amy H.) (George Brown & sons), pres First State Bank of Eagle Point.
Brown Royal G. (Mary A.) George Brown & Sons.
Brown Wm. H. (Mattie V. ) (George Brown & Sons).
Bryant Burton H. (Minnie), carpenter.
Bryant Harry, student.
Buchanan Wm. E. (Rose K), principal Eagle Point Public School.
Butte Falls and Eagle Point Telephone Co, W. C. Clements pres, Wm. von der Hellen vice-pres, L. L. Clements sec-treas.
Childreth Henry O. (Emma), blacksmith.
Childreth Isaac, student.
Childreth Orville, student.
Childreth Wesley L (Grace), blacksmith H. O.Childreth.
Cincade David (Mary E.), farmer.
Clements Walter C. (Lottie L.), pres Butte Falls and Eagle Point Telephone Co.
Cole H. Clay (Fanny), engineer Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Culbertson Ivan, mail carrier.
Culbertson John, farmer.
Curtis Jane A (wid Andres J.), bds C, S, Painter.
Dailey Adoniram J.(Rachael A.) {Daley}.
Daley George S. (Alice C.), general merchandise.
Day James, bartender Tavern Hotel.
Diamond L. A., brakeman Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Durham Henry, electrician.
Eagle Point Band, Carl Ringer pres, A. E. Strong sec.
Eagle Point Baptist Church, Rev. I. I. Simmons pastor.
Eagle Point Hardward Co. (Roy Ashpole).
Eagle Point Hotel, Mrs. Hattie Owings propr.
Eagle Point Lumber Co, Herbert G. Wiener Mngr.
Eagle Point Opera house, I. L. Bradshaw propr.
Eagle Point Public School, Wm. E. Buchanan principal, Ethel Seglinger, Mable Huff teachers.
Echenberg Fred C. rancher.
Finley Fred F. (Madge), teamster
First State Bank of Eagle Point, J. Frank Brown pres, Wm. Von der Hellen vice-pres, John V. McIntyre cashier.
Fisher George (Mathews & Fisher).
Fisher John, rancher.
Florey Andrew J. (Etta A.), postmaster.
Florey Andrew J. Jr, clerk Post Office.
Florey Marguerite, clerk Post Office.
Foster John laborer.
Fryer J. J. Mrs.
Gaines Oliver, laborer, bds Eagle Point Hotel.
Grover Jarvis W. (Nettie), farmer.
Harnish Benjamin W.
Harnish Dottie.
Harnish Ray (S. H. Harnish & son).
Harnish Robert, student
Harnish Samuel H. (Ella) (S. H. Harnish & Son).
Harnish S, H. & Son (Samuel H. and Ray), livery.
Hart Susan Mrs.
Hazelton Jennette.
Hazelton Rena Mrs, cook Tavern Hotel.
Hazelton Wm. (Rena), farmer.
Heath Frances C, student.
Heath Fred L. (Gertrude E. ), general merchandise.
Heath Fred W. clerk F. L. Heath.
Heckerthorn Isabel Mrs.{Heckathorn}
Hess Harrison, building contractor.
Holmes S. B. (Celia), propr. Snowy Butte Mills.
Holt Wm. W. P. (Isabel T.), physician.
Hoogergyde Casey (Minnie), farmer.
Howlett Alfred C, (Sarah E.).
Howlett Hattie, bds Mrs S. E. Howlett.
Howlett Sarah E. Mrs, propr. Sunnyside Hotel.
Huff Mabel, teacher Eagle Point Public School.
IOOF, Eagle Point Lodge No. 227, second and fourth Tuesday.
IOOF, Peach Rebekah Lodge No 2097, second and fourth Tuesday, IOOF Hall, Mrs Anna Bacon N. G. Miss Mabel Pruett sec.
IOOF Hall.
Jackson Carl S.
Jackson Ganelle.
Jackson James, student.
Jackson John B. (Ettie C.), farmer.
Jenson Oliver, Teamster, bds Eagle Point Hotel.
Jonas Rebecca (Wid James A.).
Jordan James (Agnes P), farmer.
Knighten Wm. G. (Julia A.), gardener.
Lake Frank E. farmer.
Lewis Bermuda, student.
Lewis Christine, student.
Lewis George, laborer.
Lewis Harry, laborer.
Lewis Jerry, laborer.
Lewis J. Frank (Della), billiards, cigars, etc.
Lewis Thomas, laborer.
Lewis Wm. laborer.
McClellan T, B, fireman Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
McIntyre John V. (Nellie B.), cashier First State Bank of Eagle Point.
McQuoild John T. Farmer.
McQuoid Norman C. (Lottie), machinist.
McQuoid Robert J. farmer.
Martin Merritt, student
Mathews Vernie (Nora) (Mathews & Fisher).
Mathews Fisher (Vernie Mathews, George Fisher), blacksmiths.
Montgomery Janette A. (wid John B.)
Moomaw Joel P. mail carrier.
Narregan L. Carl (Talliene M.), farmer.
Natwick Chris H. (Ella), grading contractor.
Newport Freeman T. (Laura E.), agent Pacific Eastern Ry Co.
Nichols Arthur (Katherine A), meats, ice and cold storage.
Nichols John M. (Drusilla S.) Mayor
Nichols J. Frank (Della), farmer.

## Polk's Jackson County Directory 1914
## Eagle Point, Oregon

Nichols Katherine A. Mrs. millinery.
Nichoils Otilla Mrs.
Nichols Thelma, student.
Nichols Thomas (Louisa).
Nichols Thomas F. farmer.
O'Farrell Joseph O Rev, pastor Roman Catholic Church.
Owings Carrie, student.
Owings George W.
Owings Hattie Mrs. propr. Eagle Point Hotel.
Owings Ralph, transfer.
Owings Willard J. clerk Eagle Point Hotel
Pacific & Eastern Ry Co. Freeman T. Newport, agent.
Painter Charles S. (May C.), farmer
Painter Howard.
Painter Walter J. student.
Phillips George (Allie), farmer.
Pierce Floyd (Gladys), miner.
Post Office, Andrew F. Florey Postmaster.
Postal Savings Depository, Andrew J.Florey in charge.
Pruett Charles A. (Melinda L.), farmer
Pruett Guy, student.
Pruett Mabel.
Reynaud Raymond L (Ruth L.), barber, tailor and cleaner.
Riley Thomas M. sign painter.
Ringer Carl, brakeman Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Ringer Chalmer.
Ringer James, painter.
Roman Catholic Church, Rev Joseph O'Farrell pastor.
Rosenberg Gustavus, farmer
Siglinger Ethel, teacher Eagle Point Public School
Simmons L. L. Rev (Nellie E.) pastor Eagle Point Baptist Church.
Smith Bros (Louis E. and LeRoy A.) billiards, cigars, etc.
Smith David, laborer.
Smith John R. hostler S. H. Harnish & Son.
Smith John W. (Cora) carpenter
Smith LeRoy A. (Smith Bros).
Smith Harry, clerk Tavern Hotel.
Snowy Butte Mills, S. B, Holmes propr, flour and feed.
Stewart F. Marion (Susie), justice of the peace.
Strong A. E. pres Eagle Point Band
Sunyside Hotel, Mrs. Sarah E.Howlett propr.
Tavern Hotel, J. M. Vogeli.
Taylor Neva.
Taylor Wm. W. farmer.
Thomas Anne Mrs.
Thomas Charles (Lela), logger.
Thronson B. F. fruit grower 1 m east.
Trusty May, operator Butte Falls and Eagle Point Telephone Co.
VanScoy Lottie (wid Paul).
Vaughn Charles, section foreman Pacific & Eastern Ry Co.
Vogeli James M (Ora E), propr. Tavern Hotel.
von der Hellen Carl, mail carrier.
von der Hellen George B (Grace), vice pres-treas-sec von der Hellen Hardware Co. Inc.
von der Hellen Hardware Co. Inc. Wm. von der Hellen pres, G. B. Von der Hellen vice-pres-treas-sec, hardware and drugs.
von der Hellen Wm. (Florence E.) pres von der Hellen Hardware Co. Inc.
Wamsley George H. carpenter.
Wamsley Mabel.
Watkins Anna.
Watkins Nancy E. (wid John).
Webber George, farmer.
Webber Laura.
Wehman George H. harness maker.
Wells Fargo & Co. Express, Freeman T. Newport, agent.
Whitman Wm. farmer.
Wiener Herbert G. mngr. Eagle Point Lumber Co.
Willetts Roy T. mail carrier.
Wilson Ransley W. farmer.
Wolary Rachael (wid Nathaniel).

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Meet Your Board Members

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Theda Havice, Secretary
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Ken Beebe, Board.

We'd like to dedicate this newsletter to our long time friend, Bob Kelty. Bob passed away December 26, 1998. Bob worked for Pacific Northwest Bell for 35 years. He donated his large phone collection to our museum for everyone to enjoy. In addition, to the phone collection, Bob, and his wife Kay, donated so many items and artifacts to our collection we had to add onto our building...twice.

I will miss seeing Bob take his daily walk to the top of the hill behind his house with his little dog trailing behind. Our thoughts are with Kay and good memories abound whenever we think of Bob. B.H.

**Membership**

Welcome new member, Mike Coy sponsored by Janice Scott.
You can sponsor a member for only $7.50 a year. They will receive our great newsletters every other month. Send your check to the Eagle Point Museum at the address listed below. We will send a newsletter and a nice card to the person you sponsor letting them know who sponsored them.


Newsletter Editor & Museum Curator:
Barbara Hegne.


What would you like to see in the newsletters for future articles?


For story ideas, corrections or additions write
P. O. Box 201 Eagle Point, OR. 97524
Phone 826-4166
Fax 830-4596

## Comments Correspondence

"It's a great effort you've put together, keep up the good work!" Pam French, Saskatchewan, Canada.

"Just moved here to E.P. This is my first time in. Even my 4 yr. old loved the old stuff. Very nicely displayed.Husband loved old pictures. Nice & leisure, it will take a couple days to really see everything, but I don't mind. We'll be back." Lisa Steeves.

"I love this museum, it's awesome!" Arlisa Hoffman C.P.

"I really enjoyed your museum. I'll be back."

"So nice to visit you folks. Keep up the good and interesting work." Les Alchett Maryland

"The museum is cool."
"Amazing."
"Very Beautiful stuff."
"Had to come back to finish looking."
"Great museum enjoyed it very much."
"Good Pictures."
"Interesting and great history study."
"Very good displays."
'A fun collection of treasures."
"It's interesting to see relics from my parents past."
"Spent 3 hours."
"Very good."
"First time in, children love it."
"Been here 10 times, love it."
"neat."
"wild."
"Very nice & clean."
"Great collection."
"cool."
"Thanks."
"Memorable."

Dear Ms. Hegne:
I received your address from Alma Spicer and appreciate very much her efforts and information regarding the book "Yonder Hills". I would like for you to reserve me a copy of your book and send me a notice of the price of the book plus shipping and handling charges. I will send a check to cover these charges so you can mail me the book.
This is a part of history of my husbands family. The Trusty family is a part of his mother's family and our son is very interested in family history. He is excited by the fact he may learn new things about his ancestors since his grandparents pioneered in Oregon. I do appreciate your kindness and look forward to hearing from you. Sincerely Nola M. Nelson, Tulsa Oklahoma.

Dear Barbara,
Thank you so very much for your research and letter on Perry B. Smith. We were so excited to hear from you. Thank you so much for the land parcel map and the post office list. It is so exciting to see them and have more clues.

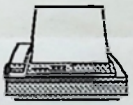
I have spent 5 years looking for information on him. I spent countless hours on the Missouri census for 1850, but couldn't find a Smith family with a Perry or the Tatom family. But I will look again, Sometime when I'm looking too hard I miss things. Thank you so very much again." Sincerely Stan & Sue Smith.Laguna Niguel, California.

Dear Eagle Point Museum.
I'm hoping you can provide some information about an old house I've enjoyed looking at over the years. On Highway 62 north of Eagle Point, across the road from the egg ranch is an old abandoned house that I've watched slowly deteriorate over the last 30+ years. My father said it appeared abandoned the first time he saw it in the early 1950's. I'm curious about the history of the house...anything...when it was built, who lived there, when was it abandoned, why, etc. It looks like such a classic old farmhouse it's sad to see it simply collapse, especially without knowing anything about it. Any info. would be appreciated! Sincerely Dennis Welbourne, Bend Oregon.

## Donation

Dr. Wehinger brought over two large poster plans of the the Antelope Covered Bridge.

## What's New In Your Museum



We have a new fax machine, a new typewriter and a color scanner. In addition, we are now able to get on the Inter Net.

If you need to send a fax we will do that for you during our office hours. The charge will be $1.00 per page. If you need to send us a fax, our number is 541-830-4596.

You are invited to our meetings the 2nd Monday of each month at 7 P.M., held at the museum on North Royal Ave. Refreshments are served courtesy of various members. Come join us in planning the historical future of the Eagle Point Historical Society and Meet new friends.

Membership:
Teens $5.00
Single $7.50
Husband & Wife $12.50
Business $10
Lifetime $100

We are located in the Historic District of Eagle Point, Oregon, between the Old Antelope Covered Bridge and the Butte Creek Mill on North Royal.
ADMISSION FREE

Winter Hours
Tues. Wed. Thurs & Fri. 12 Noon to 4pm
Saturday 10 AM to 4pm.
Closed Sunday & Monday
Museum 826-4166

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# True Historical Stories

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